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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/735,841	12/12/2003	Lap-Wai Chow	B-4425NP 621267-1	3188
36716	7590	11/21/2007		
LADAS & PARRY 5670 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 2100 LOS ANGELES, CA 90036-5679			EXAMINER LEE, EUGENE	
			ART UNIT 2815	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 11/21/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/735,841

Applicant(s)

CHOW ET AL.

Examiner

Eugene Lee

Art Unit

2815

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 September 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 6 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/12/07.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sawada et al. 5,210,437. Sawada discloses (see, for example, FIG. 2E) a semiconductor device (camouflaged circuit structure) having a gate electrode (gate region) 27, substrate 21, source and drain diffusion layers (first active region/second active region) 28, and well (first well) 25. In claim 2, Sawada discloses the well is the same conductivity type (first conductivity type) as that of said source and drain layers.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 2 thru 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sawada et al. '437 as applied to claims 1, and 5 above, and further in view of Spadea 3,983,620. Sawada does not disclose a plurality of wells of a second type, at least one of said plurality of wells of a

second type being in physical contact with said first active region. However, Spadea discloses (see, for example, Fig. 19) a semiconductor device comprising P+ source and drain regions 17, 17' and N+ guard rings (plurality or wells of a second type) 22. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have a plurality of wells of a second type, at least one of said plurality of wells of a second type being in physical contact with said first active region in order to isolate the transistor from other elements in a semiconductor device.

#### *Allowable Subject Matter*

6. Claim 6 is allowed. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The references of record, either singularly or in combination, do not teach or suggest at least a semiconductor circuit comprising: a substrate having a first well of a first conductivity type; a gate region being arranged above the first well; a plurality of active regions of said first conductivity type in physical contact with said first well of said first conductivity type; and a plurality of wells of a second conductivity type, wherein said plurality of wells of a second conductivity type are separated from said first well.

#### *Response to Arguments*

7. Applicant's arguments filed 9/10/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding applicant's argument that Sawada can not be deemed to disclose or suggest a structure having a well that "provides an electrical path between said first and second active

regions regardless of any reasonable voltage applied to said circuit, this argument is not persuasive. It is unclear what structural feature of the applicant's invention makes it operate differently than the structure disclosed in FIG. 2E of Sawada. As the claims are currently written, it is inherent that the well 25 of Sawada would provide an electrical path between said first and second active regions regardless of any reasonable voltage applied to said circuit because of the same structure. The applicant states on page 5 of the response filed 9/10/07 that "since the structures operate differently, they have necessarily a different structure"; however, it is not apparent what this different structure would be because by reading the claimed limitations and also the applicant's figures (i.e. Figure 6d) it would appear that the Sawada's invention and applicant's invention are structurally identical, and therefore, their electrical effects (i.e. provides an electrical path between said first and second active regions regardless of any reasonable voltage applied to said circuit) also. Further, on page 10, second paragraph of the specification, applicant denotes "additional n-type well connecting active regions 16a, 18a, **thereby** providing a conductive path between the active regions 16a, 18a regardless of the voltages applied." From the applicant's specification, the applicant states having an additional n-type well connecting active regions is what makes "a conductive path between the active regions 16a, 18a regardless of the voltages applied."

#### *Conclusion*

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

#### **INFORMATION ON HOW TO CONTACT THE USPTO**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eugene Lee whose telephone number is 571-272-1733. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kenneth Parker can be reached on 571-272-2298. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Application/Control Number:  
10/735,841  
Art Unit: 2815

Page 6

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Eugene Lee  
November 16, 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eugene Lee', with a stylized, flowing script.

EUGENE LEE  
PRIMARY EXAMINER